

**REPORT**

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>To:</b> COATBRIDGE LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP   | <b>Subject :</b> COATBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN UPDATE |  |
| <b>From:</b> HEAD OF PLANNING AND REGENERATION |  |  |
| <b>Date:</b> 24 August 2016                    | <b>Ref:</b> PL/DIT/12/                                     |  |

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report seeks to update the Partnership and Committee on progress with the Coatbridge Town Centre Action Plan.

**2. Coatbridge Town Centre Framework and Action Plan**

- 2.1 The Coatbridge Town Centre Framework and Action Plan were approved by the Planning and Transport Committee on 9 December 2015. The Coatbridge Town Centre Action Plan has now been adopted as Supplementary Guidance to the North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012.

**3. Capital Budget**

- 3.1 As previously reported, no funding was allocated to Coatbridge in the Council's Capital Programme for the period 2013/14 to 2017/18. Consequently the new Framework and Action Plan for Coatbridge will need to identify opportunities for external funding.
- 3.2 The Coatbridge Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) which has up to £800,000 of grant funding awarded by Historic Environment Scotland and £650,000 of Council match funding was launched officially at the beginning of June 2016. Property owners within the project boundary have been notified and invited to submit expressions of interest in participating in the scheme. John Gilbert Architects Ltd, specialist conservation architectural consultants, were appointed by the Council on 30 June to assist with implementing the CARS.

**4. Town Centre Projects' Update**

Car Parking

- 4.1 The car park at Baird Street is almost complete and is currently in use. There is some work to be carried out on the lighting columns later in the year and some minor snagging work to be resolved.
- 4.2 There is no change to progress in the development of the proposed car parking on the site of the former Hebron Hall. This has been delayed due to land acquisition problems relating to the vendor. There is no indication of a conclusion to this matter in the short term.
- 4.3 The site at 7 Church Street previously acquired by the Council has planning permission to be developed for additional town centre parking. Work to satisfy conditions attached to the permission is currently underway.
- 4.4 The Feasibility Study for additional parking at the ASDA store has been completed. Supplementary information is being reviewed to establish the cost implications of the project.

Potential Housing Development

- 4.5 It is still hoped that the property at 7-13 Bank Street will be redeveloped by Clyde Valley Housing Association and leased to the Council for use as supported accommodation. The

details of the funding arrangements for both revenue and capital are being examined to ensure the project's financial viability and to minimise risk for all parties involved. Further discussions are under way the Scottish Government to secure the capital grant.

- 4.6 Clyde Valley Housing Association issued the tender documents for the redevelopment of the former Carnegie Library building at the beginning of July. Tenders are due for return in the week beginning 22 August 2016. The redevelopment of the building will provide 12 flats and a site start is anticipated towards the end of the year.
- 4.7 The site of the former tax office at the corner of St John Street and Muirhall Street has been acquired by the Council. Committee approval has been granted to transfer the site to Loretto Housing Association for the development of 24 amenity flats. The Council is close to concluding the legal agreement to grant Loretto the licence required to demolish the building. Further ground investigations will be undertaken by the Housing Association once the site is cleared to determine if the site is suitable for residential development.

## 5. Town Centre Activities Update

- 5.1 The table below summarises the key findings of the business activity for the 7 town centres for quarter 4, January to March 2015/16.

| North Lanarkshire Town Centre Vacancies January to March 2016 |                              |                                |                |                   |                             |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Town Centre   | Total no. of available units | Total no. of active businesses | New businesses | Businesses closed | Void Units (% vacancy rate) |
| Airdrie   | 316                          | 284                            | 1              | 3                 | 32 (10.1%)                  |
| Bellshill   | 146                          | 140                            | 1              | 1                 | 6 (4.1%)                    |
| <b>Coatbridge</b>   | <b>230</b>                   | <b>186</b>                     | <b>2</b>       | <b>0</b>          | <b>44 (19.1%)</b>           |
| Cumbernauld   | 215                          | 172                            | 2              | 3                 | 43 (20.0%)                  |
| Kilsyth   | 97                           | 85                             | 1              | 0                 | 12 (12.4%)                  |
| Motherwell  | 278                          | 258                            | 5              | 5                 | 20 (7.2%)                   |
| Wishaw  | 301                          | 252                            | 1              | 4                 | 49 (16.3%)                  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1583</b>                  | <b>1377</b>                    | <b>13</b>      | <b>16</b>         | <b>206 (13.0%)</b>          |

Source TCA Q4 2015/16

- 4.2 The IN North Lanarkshire digital communication platform was launched at the end of May as a collective approach to promoting North Lanarkshire town centres. Each town has individual branding under the IN North Lanarkshire brand and has its own digital platform consisting of a custom built, mobile responsive website, a Facebook page and a twitter account.
- 4.3 The 'IN North Lanarkshire' websites are owned and managed by TCA Ltd. The brand has been promoted through Facebook and at town centre events with special promotions being offered to shoppers through the 'IN' Facebook sites. Training sessions were carried out in Wishaw and Motherwell to help businesses improve their digital skills and initial feedback has been positive.
- 4.4 Coatbridge had 984 registrations on the free town centre WiFi service in the period January to March 2016. With the launch of Facebook pages for each town centre it is hoped that the use of free WiFi will increase further. The performance and usage statistics of the town centre WiFi service are outlined in the table below.

| Town              | Number of New Registrations for Q4 | Number of Registrations to date | Number of logins for Q4 | Total number of logins to date | Average time in minutes users spend on the network each day |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Airdrie           | 1,363                              | 19,407                          | 15,615                  | 64,156                         | 9   |
| Bellshill         | 949                                | 15,563                          | 14,137                  | 59,531                         | 13  |
| <b>Coatbridge</b> | <b>984</b>                         | <b>17,426</b>                   | <b>14,028</b>           | <b>74,680</b>                  | <b>13</b>   |
| Kilsyth           | 280                                | 4333                            | 6613                    | 25,610                         | 35  |
| Motherwell        | 2,953                              | 56,645                          | 32,307                  | 168,396                        | 6   |
| Wishaw            | 1,210                              | 22,300                          | 18,943                  | 96,045                         | 14  |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>7,739</b>                       | <b>135,674</b>                  | <b>10,1643</b>          | <b>488,418</b>                 | <b>15</b>   |

Source TCA Q4 2015/16

## 6. Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this report.

*Shirley Linton*

**SHIRLEY LINTON**  
**HEAD OF PLANNING AND REGENERATION**

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report,  
Please contact Shirley Penman on 01236 632633 (25 July 2016)